

Asia festival frenzy kicks off 2025 closes with spotlight on region's creativity

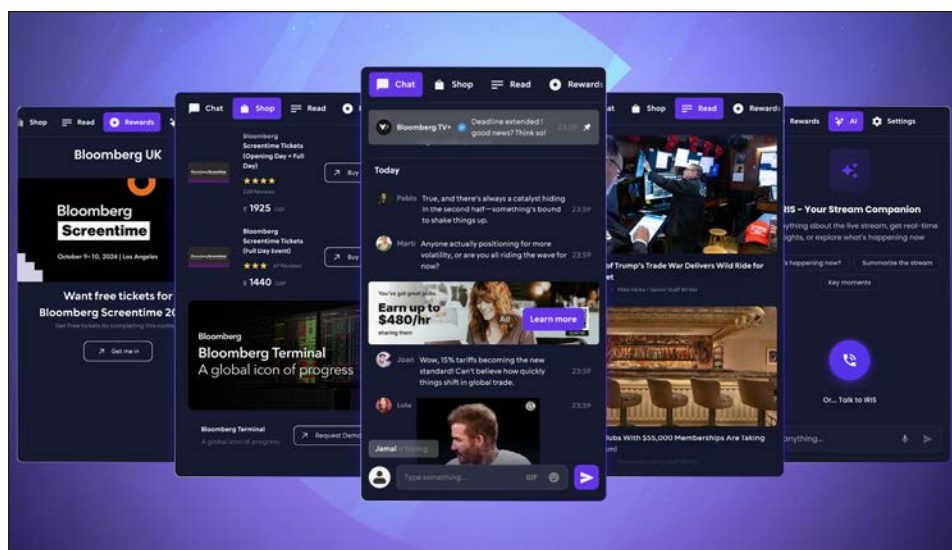
Seven weeks of back-to-back Asia market and festival frenzy kicks off this week, beginning today with the Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF), followed on Wednesday by the TIFFCOM market in Tokyo and the Ubud Writers Festival in Bali, and then by Taiwan's TAICCA-backed TCCF, the JAFF Market in Yogyakarta, part of the Jogja-NETPAC Asian Film Festival, and the ATF and Singapore International Film Festival, both cornerstones of the Singapore-government's 12-day multi-event Singapore Media Festival.

The full story is on page 11

Mediacorp x StarHub – confirmed Singapore's top two platforms join forces

Singapore's Mediacorp is adding StarHub TV+ to its meWatch platform in a deal we tipped weeks ago and which StarHub confirmed today (27 Oct). StarHub says the new arrangement, which it called a "key milestone" and "more than a commercial agreement", will give "everyone in Singapore easier access to the content they love", including the Premier League. Using words like "simpler" and "seamless", the infinitely sensible StarHub CEO, Nikhil Eapen, said today that the partnership was about "making technology and media work better for people". Pricing and other practical details don't appear to have been made public; we're on it...

Streaming Value Crisis: Why 47% of subscribers feel ripped off BoltOS turns subscription fatigue into loyalty with AI-driven curation and real rewards that make every dollar count.



Here's the maddening paradox: streaming services offer more quality content than ever, yet 47% of subscribers think they're overpaying. Another 41% say the content isn't worth the price. This isn't buyer's remorse – it's a full-scale value crisis that's poisoning the entire subscription economy.

The problem? Subscription sprawl meets choice paralysis. The average household now manages six different services, paying more than cable ever cost for the privilege of endless browsing. Netflix alone produces thousands of hours annually, but most subscribers watch the same handful of shows. They're paying for libraries they'll never explore, drowning in options whilst starving for satisfaction.

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ences to surface relevant content from overwhelming catalogues. Rather than algorithmic guesswork, viewers get intelligent curation that actually respects their time.

The **Reward feature** changes the entire value equation – viewers earn whilst they engage, creating tangible returns on their attention. **Interactive formats** break the passive consumption cycle, letting viewers influence their experience rather than just consume it.

The **Shop feature** captures purchase intent at its peak, whilst the **Contextual Read panel** connects fragmented content across platforms into coherent experiences. Suddenly, subscriptions stop feeling like a grudge purchase and start delivering measurable value.

The shift is stark: subscribers stop calculating cost-per-view and start recognising genuine worth. They're no longer paying for potential – they're investing in experiences that deliver.

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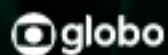


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The Voice Pakistan in the works

2026 debut for latest ITV Studios' adaptation in Asia



Usman Malik, CEO, Continue

The first Pakistan version of ITV Studios' blockbuster singing format *The Voice* is in the works in an adaptation deal with Karachi-based regional media company Continue.

Auditions kick off in Q2 2026 and the target premiere date is Q3 2026.

Still early days, but Continue founder and CEO, Usman Malik, says he picked *The Voice* because it focuses on talent "not looks", costs can be controlled and the brand personality is Gen-Z friendly.

The Voice Pakistan joins about 160 versions and extensions around the world, including adaptations in South

Asian markets of Nepal and Sri Lanka.

This year, Sri Lanka has added seasons three and four of *The Voice* as well as season three of *The Voice Teens*, and Nepal is into season six of *The Voice*. In 2023/4, Sri Lanka aired the second season of *The Voice Generations*.

Elsewhere in Asia, versions of *The Voice* have aired in Mongolia (*The Voice Kids*, season one, 2024), Philippines (season 6/7, 2024 along with *The Voice Teens*), Thailand (season 10, 2024 along with *The Voice Pride*), and Vietnam (*The Voice Kids* season 8, 2024). Source: ContentAsia Formats Outlook

4 Asia titles top Prime Video November 2 Korea + 1 anime + ABS-CBN Philippines' thriller

Prime Video adds two Korean titles, one animation series, and ABS-CBN's Philippines' thriller *The Alibi* to its lineup in Asia in November.

The Korean titles are drama *Nice to Not Meet You* (3 Nov) starring Lee Jung-jae, and reality show *Perfect Glow* (22 Nov), about a Korean beauty shop that opens in the heart of Manhattan.

The anime highlight is eight-part anthology adaptation, *Tatsuki Fujimoto* 17-26, which releases globally on 7 Nov.

The Alibi, produced by Dreamscape Entertainment and ABS-CBN Studios, releases on 7 Nov. The series stars Paulo Avelino heir to a media dynasty and Kim Chiu as a sex worker in a tale of desire, deception and deadly secrets.

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"The BA***DS of Bollywood" debuts at #4 on Netflix's global non-English TV top 10

A single Indian series has made it to Netflix's global top 10 non-English TV rankings this month so far - Indian film star Aryan Khan's "The BA***DS of Bollywood". The 14.8 million hours viewed (2.8 million views) for the week of 15-21 September made it months of jabs about daddy's influence, mommy's guiding hand and an insider strings.

The seven-episode series, announced in February, September, placed fourth, behind Korean "Billionaires" "Bunker" and Mexico's "The Family Man".

Produced by the Khan, was the top show in eight other countries including Pakistan and the U.S.

Philippines' Viva to launch standalone microdrama app in October; 20 home-grown vertical series go into start-up phase

Philippines' entertainment conglomerate Viva Communications is adding home-grown standalone vertical video microdrama app to its subscription service by the end of October.

The new app, Viva Movie Box, goes live with a slate of 20 native-vertical video series and produced in-house, the company told ContentAsia during the Market in Busan this week.

One new 90-minute series (between 50-75 episodes) will release. Eight of the series are already complete and the other 12 are in production.

Viva Movie Box originals follow the format that has catapulted the global attention charts - made for mobile vertical videos of bet tabloid titles, high-drama revenge/betrayal/conflict story lines.

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Prime Video adds NBA League Pass in India

NBA League rolled out in India for the first time as an add-on subscription to Prime Video. The NBA League Pass, launched on 25 October, offers live and on-demand games, with three subscription options, from Rs199/US\$2.26 to Rs329/US\$3.72 a month. Select games are offered to all Prime Video members.



RTHK, Gov't release WWII doc series

Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) and the Special Administrative Region's Government Information Services Department premiered five-episode short-form drama *The War of Resistance* this month (17 Oct) to mark the 80th anniversary "of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War".

Media material released for the launch said the drama "commemorates the arduous years of the war, promotes patriotism, and reminds everyone to cherish peace".

The War of Resistance is set in Hong Kong during the Second Sino-Japanese War. The story follows Yupian (played by Wu Zefeng), who originally planned to flee Hong Kong with his family. When he witnesses tragedy and brutality as part of his cousin's guerrilla unit, his patriotic feelings grow.

Director of Broadcasting Kwan Yuen-ye and Director of Information Services Liao Li-kei said during the event that the minidrama format episodes of about six mins allowed "for a more contemporary approach to conveying national history and patriotic sentiments".

Kwan said AI has been used to recreate historical scenes and also to improve production efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Four Asia platforms pick up *The Assassin* Two Brothers' Pictures' series to air across the region



The Assassin

Four platforms in Asia have acquired rights to action series *The Assassin* in post-MIPCOM deals with global indie distributor, All3Media International.

The six-part series will air on BBC Player and premium SVOD service BBC First in Asia and India, as well as on Wowow in Japan and Sohu in China, as well as on Sky Free (Three and ThreeNow) in New Zealand.

The Assassin stars Keeley Hawes

as retired assassin Julie and Freddie Highmore her estranged son Edward forced to work together in a fight for survival.

The series was produced by Two Brothers Pictures' in association with All3Media International, ZDF and Australia's Stan for Prime Video U.K. Lisa Mulcahy (*The Tourist*) directed episodes 1-3 and Daniel Nettheim (*The Tourist*) directed episodes 4-6.

Asia deals for CBS' *Boston Blue* AXN Asia, Coupang Play among 100+ market pickups

Regional channel AXN Asia and Korean streaming platform Coupang Play have picked up rights to CBS original series *Boston Blue*, which had its world premiere at MIPCOM earlier this month.

In the broader Asia Pacific region, Paramount+ in Australia and Sky New Zealand will also air the detective series, distributor Paramount Global said in its

post MIPCOM announcement.

The deals are among the 100 markets around the world also taking the show, which launched in the U.S. on 17 October.

Boston Blue stars Donnie Wahlberg as NYPD Detective Danny Reagan in a universe expansion of the long-running drama *Blue Bloods*.



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ABS-CBN, AIS Play to air Miss Universe

Four Asia platforms take live rights for Nov pageant



Miss Universe 2024

The Philippines' ABS-CBN and Thailand's AIS Play have added this year's 74th Miss Universe Pageant to their schedules, bringing Asia's official distribution partners to four, the Miss Universe Organisation said ahead of the 74th event in Bangkok on 19 and 21 November. FPT in Vietnam and Supreme TV in Sri Lanka (Supreme TV) have also signed on for this year's event.

ABS-CBN returns the grand finale live to its line-up as part of a multi-year deal, while AIS Play, which has been aggressively acquiring rights to high-profile properties, is on board for the first time.

AIS Play will air all three events – the

National Costume (19 Nov), the Preliminary Competition (19 Nov), and the Finale (21 Nov). Last year's official Thai platform was JKN18, which will air this year's pageant a week later.

The rest of Asia will be able to access the live feeds on the Miss Universe Organisation's YouTube Channel.

This year's show director is U.K.-based veteran, Marcus Viner, who has been involved in large-scale international events including fashion, music and theatre.

The show will be hosted by U.S. stand-up comedian and actor, Steve Byrne – the first comedian to host the 74-year-old event.

First Chinese FAST channel rolls out in France

Shanghai Media Group subsidiary, WingsMedia, and Europe-based streaming platform Rakuten TV rolled out France's first Chinese FAST channel this month as part of China's ongoing "go global" strategy. The channel is also available in Belgium and Luxembourg. Plans are to take the new channel across Europe.

Bo Zhang's Paris-based Bolytics

brokered the deal for C-Drama NOW (Magnolia Time) FAST Channel, which launched with Chinese dramas, such as *A Good Life*, dubbed in French. The line-up also includes *A World for Two* and *Go Lala Goes Up* from Shangshi Pictures. The launch announcement mentioned contemporary Chinese blockbusters *The Detective Jane Doesn't Know* and *Mountains and Seas*.

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Wednesday, 23 October 2024

Timo Tjahjanto's "The Shadow Strays" hits Netflix top 10 lists in 85 countries; high-action underworld feature debuts at #2 on non-English films global top 10

Timo Tjahjanto's high-action Netflix top 10 lists in 85 countries viewed around the world

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Mediacorp's "Emerald Hill" in Netflix premium Chinese drama to simulcast on premium and Netflix on 10 March

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What's inside....

Microdrama: Money, Morals & the Space Race

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***Sins of Kujo* on the way in TBS x Netflix deal**

First live action adaptation of Shohei Manabe's manga, global debut set for 2026

Netflix has added Tokyo Broadcasting System Television Inc.'s (TBS) live-action series *Sins of Kujo* – an adaptation of Shohei Manabe's (*Ushijima the Loan Shark*) manga – to its global line-up for Spring 2026.

This month's announcement runs alongside the strong showing of Japanese anime titles on Netflix's non-English global top 10, as well as live action series *Alice in Borderland*.

Sins of Kujo debuted in *Weekly Big Comic Spirits* (Shogakukan) in October 2020, and now has 14 volumes and over four million copies sold.

Described as a "thrilling exploration of law, morality and the dark underbelly of modern society", the crime drama stars Yuya Yagira (*Asakusa Kid*) as Taiza Kujo, a lawyer notorious for taking on the most dangerous, morally ambiguous cases.

Hokuto Matsumura plays Shinji Karasuma, a University of Tokyo graduate and elite lawyer, with Elaiza Ikeda as Hitomi Yakushimae, a social worker who sees criminals through a different lens.

Keita Machida plays Kengo Mibu, an auto repair shop owner with deep underworld ties; Takuma Otoo appears as detective Yoshinobu Arashiyama; and Tsuyoshi Muro is cast as gang boss Kiyoshi Kyogoku.

Yagira talks about the series as fiction that offers "an impressive kind of realism and immediacy".

"Reading through it, you sense the constant push and pull between the ideas that 'ignorance is bliss' and 'ignorance is a sin'," he says, asking: "Where do the principles and beliefs behind the actions of the so-called 'corrupt lawyer' Kujo ultimately lie?"

Sins of Kujo is directed by Nobuhiko Doi (*The Voice of Sin*), with Takeyoshi Yamamoto and Hiroshi Adachi. Shinichi Takahashi is the executive producer for Netflix.

Written by Nonji Nemoto, the show is produced by TBS' Atsushi Nasuda. The production company is TBS Sparkle.



Sins of Kujo

These days, the overwhelming flood of information has caused many people to simply close their weary ears. Truth is being crushed by what the loud majority deems justice. Good and evil are interchangeable, depending on your perspective. In these times when we aren't quite sure how to live our lives, *Sins of Kujo* might just help each of us to decide".

Shohei Manabe
Author, *Sins of Kujo*

Doi said there "isn't a single creator who wouldn't be interested in this project", which he said featured no simple or easy-to-understand characters.

"Every character has their own nuanced perspectives and complex circumstances that aren't simply black and white," he said, talking about the journey to "discover what exactly 'sin' and 'justice' mean".

Original author Shohei Manabe weighed in on the story's place in a bigger landscape and larger goals.

"Today's rapidly changing, complicated world is an endlessly fascinating time to work as a creator, but life is neither simple nor easy.

"These days, the overwhelming flood of information has caused many people to simply close their weary ears. Truth is being crushed by what the loud majority deems justice. Good and evil are interchangeable, depending on your perspective. In these times when we aren't quite sure how to live our lives, *Sins of Kujo* might just help each of us to decide".



The Big List Digital Directory 2025

ContentAsia's Big List is the only directory of its kind, fully focused on Asia with lists of the top content providers, services, channels, platforms and people in key markets, including streaming/OTT/online players, free-TV broadcasters, pay-TV platforms, production houses, streaming/broadcast tech, regulators/associations and others.

The directory, distributed monthly, offers video value-adds as part of ContentAsia's Screening Room.

The Big List's enhanced listings appear across multiple platforms, including year-round visibility at ContentAsia's online destination at www.contentasia.tv.

The initial distribution is via email to our full database of over 12,400 verified addresses, with links to the enhanced listings to our full database every two weeks.

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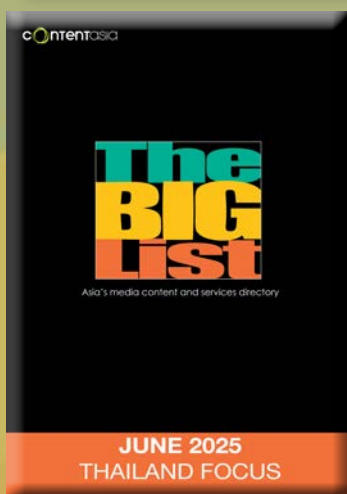
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Asia festival frenzy kicks off this week

2025 closes with spotlight on creativity across the region

Seven weeks of back-to-back Asia market and festival frenzy kicks off this week, beginning today with the Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) and followed on Wednesday with the TIFFCOM market in Tokyo (29-31 Oct) and the Ubud Writers Festival in Bali (29 Oct-2 Nov). Next is Taiwan's TAICCA-backed TCCF (4-7 Nov), the JAFF Market in Yogyakarta (29 Nov-1 Dec), part of the Jogja-NETPAC Asian Film Festival (JAFF), and the ATF (2-5 Dec) and Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF), both cornerstones of the Singapore-government's 12-day multi-event Singapore Media Festival (SMF), which runs from 26 Nov-7 Dec.

The three-day TIFFCOM market, running parallel to the Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF), opens on Wednesday with a focus on Southeast Asian co-production, the future of Japanese IP in global adaptations and Thai BL/GL, along with current trends in Turkish remakes.

In Bali, 150 speakers take to the stage for four days of conversations, masterclasses, workshops and special sessions that are part of the Ubud Writers Festival. A highlight is Thursday's fund-raising dinner with William Dalrymple, Pico Iyer, Banu Mushtaq and others in support of the Emerging Writers Programme and the YLAI Library Project, dedicated to building five child-friendly libraries in the Gianyar region.

Shifting to Taiwan from 4 Nov, the annual event opens with the launch of global funds – the NT\$9.6-billion Taiwan-Korea Entertainment & Cultural Content Fund and the NT\$6-billion Far Eastern Creative Entertainment Fund. In addition to Asia's best/most comprehensive pitch, TCCF is also ground zero for other funding/production initiatives. These include the official launch of Joint Journey Creative (JJC), which is already part of a three-party venture to boost the development of romantic series.

Returning for a second edition after its 2024 debut, the three-day JAFF Market gathers filmmakers, producers, and financiers from across Southeast Asia. This


SGIFF opening film, *Girl*

Ratchapoom Boonbunchachok, *A Useful Ghost*


Cendol from director Qi Yuwu


Chen Deming, *Always*

year's event is part of the 20th-anniversary celebrations of the Jogja-NETPAC Asian Film Festival (JAFF), which is supported by Indonesia's Ministry of Creative Economy. The festival includes the JAFF Future Project – a partnership with Australia's Adelaide Film Festival (AFF) and Lorna Tee's mylab.

The Future Project, designed as a development and co-production hub, features 10 early-stage fiction and docu titles from across the Asia Pacific. Organisers say this year's selection "showcases filmmakers whose works capture the region's creative diversity, cinematic innovation, and growing spirit of cross-border collaboration". The projects include Korean director Park Kiyong's *Ghost Island*; and Eddie Cahyono's *My Mother*.

The 36th Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) hosts 120 film screenings from about 45 countries, including James Thoo's *The Sandbox* (Singapore), Thai director Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke's Thailand-Singapore co-pro *A Useful Ghost*, and Rohan Parashuram Kanawade's *Cactus Pears* from India. The opening film on 26 November is *Girl / 女孩*, a coming-of-age drama written and directed by Shu Qi.

What's on where...

October 2025	28	AVIA: Northeast Asia Video Summit 2025	Tokyo, Japan
	29-31	TIFFCOM 2025	Tokyo, Japan
November 2025	4-7	Taiwan Creative Content Fest 2025 (TCCF)	Taipei, Taiwan
	4-5	Dubai International Content Market 2025 (DICM)	Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai
	26-28	World Content Market 2025	Moscow
	30 Nov-7 Dec	Jogja-NETPAC Asian Film Festival 2025	Yogyakarta, Indonesia
	29 Nov-1 Dec	JAFF Market 2025	Yogyakarta, Indonesia
December 2025	2	Asia TV Forum & Market 2025 (ATF) – ATF Leaders Dialogue	Singapore
	3-5	Asia TV Forum & Market 2025 (ATF) – Market & Conference	Singapore
February 2026	22-24	Mip London 2026	London, U.K.
		The London TV Screenings 2026	London, U.K.
March 2026	2-5	Australian International Documentary Conference 2026 (AIDC)	Melbourne, Australia
	17-20	Hong Kong FILMART 2026	Hong Kong
	24-26	Series Mania Forum 2026	Lille, Hauts-de-France
April 2026	23-28	Canneseries 2026	Cannes, France
June 2026	8-11	Nem Dubrovnik 2026	Croatia
	10-12	20th Busan Content Market 2026	Busan, Korea
	16-18	APOS 2026	Bali, Indonesia
	17-19	19th Content Tokyo 2026	Tokyo, Japan
	22-25	Sunny Side of the Doc 2026	La Rochelle, France
	24-26	Telefilm Vietnam 2026	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
October 2026	12-15	Mipcom 2026	Cannes, France

* As of 23 October 2025

The full list of events is available at www.contentasia.tv/events

Peacemaker hits demand high spot

HBO Max original tops digital rankings in Malaysia

HBO Max made a rare appearance on Asia's demand rankings for the week of 13-19 October, beating rival streamers in Malaysia to #1 with James Gunn/DC Studios' *Peacemaker*, according to Parrot Analytics.

Peacemaker ended the week with 22.5 x higher demand than the average show in Malaysia, just shy of the 23.6 x of the overall winner, Japanese anime series, *My Hero Academia*.

Overall, Prime Video took four of the top 10 digital spots in Malaysia for the week, including *Invincible* and *Hazbin Hotel*, followed by Netflix with three, Crunchyroll with *TO BE HERO X* and Paramount+ with *Tulsa King*.

Only three titles hit the 20 x demand mark, with most landing between 13.7x (*Tulsa King*) and 18.1x (Korean drama, *Bon Appetit, Your Majesty*).

Top 10 overall TV originals: Malaysia

Rank	Title	Difference from Market Average (x times)
1	<i>My Hero Academia</i>	23.6
2	<i>Peacemaker</i>	22.5
3	<i>Genie, Make A Wish</i>	20.2
4	<i>Bon Appetit, Your Majesty</i>	18.1
5	<i>Tougen Anki</i>	18.0
6	<i>Invincible</i>	17.3
7	<i>Upin & Ipin</i>	17.2
8	<i>Hazbin Hotel</i>	16.8
9	<i>Boboiboy: Galaxy</i>	16.5
10	<i>Didi & Friends</i>	16.5

Top 10 digital originals: Malaysia

Rank	Title	Platform	Difference from Market Average (x times)
1	<i>Peacemaker</i>	HBO Max	22.5
2	<i>Genie, Make A Wish</i>	Netflix	20.2
3	<i>Invincible</i>	Amazon Prime Video	17.3
4	<i>Hazbin Hotel</i>	Amazon Prime Video	16.8
5	<i>Didi & Friends</i>	Netflix	16.5
6	<i>TO BE HERO X</i>	Crunchyroll	16.0
7	<i>Alice In Borderland</i>	Netflix	15.9
8	<i>Gen V</i>	Amazon Prime Video	14.8
9	<i>Reacher</i>	Amazon Prime Video	14.1
10	<i>Tulsa King</i>	Paramount+	13.7

Date range: 13-19 October, 2025

The total audience demand being expressed for a title, within a market. Audience demand reflects the desire, engagement and viewership, weighted by importance; so a stream/download is a higher expression of demand than a 'like'/comment. In this dataset we are comparing the demand that exists for each series in this market, against the average TV show. A difference of 1x represents the market average and 10x means a series is 10 times more in demand than the average TV show in this market



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